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SUBJECT:OPPOSITION LEADER DUVAL REPORTED TO BE CONSIDERING
WITHDRAWING FROM POLITICS BECAUSE OF ILL HEALTH

SUMMARY: THE MAJOR POLITICAL NEWS OF THE PAST WEEK, ASIDE FROM THE ATTENDANCE OF THE MARXIST MAURITIAN MILITANT MOVEMENT (MMM) PARTY LEADER PAUL BERENGER AT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY'S BICENTENNIAL RECEPTION (TO BE REPORTED BY AIRGRAM), HAVE BEEN REPORTS IN THE PRESS THAT GAETAN DUVAL, LEADER OF THE PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION AND OF THE MAURITIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, IS GRAVELY ILL, WILL BE OUT OF ACTION FOR SEVERAL MONTHS WHILE HE SEEKS TREATMENT ABROAD, AND IS ACTUALLY CONSIDERING ENDING HIS POLITICAL CAREER BECAUSE OF "DISCOURAGEMENT." EMD SUMMARY

1. DUVAL WAS REPORTED BY HIS OWN PAPER, LE POPULAIRE, TO HAVE FALLEN ILL ABOUT 13 SEPTEMBER. THE PAPER SAID HIS DOCTORS HAD ORDERED HIM TO REST FOR SEVERAL WEEKS. LE POPULAIRE OFFERED NO FURTHER DETAILS, BUT ON 20 SEPTEMBER THE INDEPENDENT DAILY LE MAURICIEN HEADLINED THAT DUVAL WOULD BE ABSENT ABROAD FOR TWO TO THREE MONTHS. HE WAS REPORTED TO BE PLANNING TO GO TO SWITZERLAND FOR TREATMENT AND TO REST WITH FRIENDS, AND NOT TO RETURN TO MAURITIUS BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR. WITH ELECTIONS EXPECTED TO BE ANNOUNCED SHORTLY, THIS WAS SAID TO BE CAUSING CONSTERNATION IN PMSD RANKS, SINCE THE PARTY IS VERY MUCH A PERSONAL PROJECTION OF DUVAL, WHOSE ABSENCE

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WOULD PROBABLY HURT THE PARTY'S PROSPECTS SEVERELY. DUVAL

WAS SAID TO BE ON THE VERGE OF TAKING IMPORTANT DECISIONS
RELATING TO WHETHER HE WOULD CONTINUE AS LEADER OF THE PARTY.

2. LE MAURICIEN WENT ON TO SPECULATE ABOUT THE UNDERLYING
CAUSES OF THIS NEW DEVELOPMENT. IT SAID THAT DUVAL IS VERY
DISCOURAGED BECAUSE THE APPEAL HE HAD LAUNCHED AT THE BEGINNING
OF SEPTEMBER FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE PMSD FOR THE
FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS HAD MET WITH LITTLE RESPONSE. DUVAL
WAS SAID TO HAVE TOLD HIS CLOSE COLLABORATORS, "I'VE HAD
ENOUGH." DUVAL HAS RECENTLY SOLD TWO PEICES OF PROPERTY AND
IS THINKING OF SELLING ONE OF HIS TWO HOUSES, THE PAPER SAID.
HE IS ALSO CONSIDERING AN OFFER TO TAKE UP A POST ABROAD AS
A JURIST. LE MAURICIEN SAID DUVAL WAS TO MEET THAT DAY WITH
HIS CLOSE AIDES TO DISCUSS HIS SITUATION. HE HAD REFUSED
TO MAKE ANY STATEMENT TO THE PAPER.

3. ON 21 SEPTEMBER LE MAURICIEN REPORTED THAT DUVAL HAD MET
THE PREVIOUS DAY WITH HIS PARTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND A
HOST OF ASSOCIATES AND HAD CONFIRMED THAT HE WAS WITHDRAWING
FROM ACTIVE CAMPAIGNING BECAUSE OF HIS HEALTH. HE REPORTEDLY
PLANNED TO TRY TREATMENT IN MAURITIUS BEFORE GOINT TO
SWITZERLAND A COUPLE OF WEEKS FROM NOW. HE TOLD HIS
ASSOCIATES THAT THE PARTY WOULD HAVE TO DO ITS BEST WITHOUT
HIM.

4. THE INDEPENDENT PAPER L'EXPRESS FOLLOWED UP ON 22 SEPTEMBER
WITH AN APPARENTLY WELL-RESEARCHED ANALYSIS OF JUST WHAT IS
TROUBLING DUVAL AND THE PMSD. THE PAPER CONCLUDED THAT WHILE
THE LEADER IS ACTUALLY ILL, HIS DEPRESSION IS CAUSED MAINLY
BY FINANCIAL TROUBLES, BOTH PERSONAL AND PARTY. THOUGH
DUVAL REFUSED TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH THE PAPER, HE DID
CONFIRM THAT IF HIS STATE OF HEALTH DID NOT REQUIRE AN URGENT
DEPARTURE ABROAD HE INTENDED TO REMAIN HERE THROUGH THE PMSD
CONGRESS SCHEDULED FOR 3 OCTOBER. HE PROMISED TO "TELL THE
WHOLE TRUTH" ON THAT OCCASION. L'EXPRESS POINTED OUT
THAT DUVAL'S DOCTORS HAVE FORBIDDEN HIM ANY ACTIVITY, WHICH
MEANS THAT HIS EARNINGS AS A LAWYER, ON WHICH HE DEPENDS TO
FINANCE HIS POLITICAL AND TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES, WILL NEARLY
CEASE DURING HIS ILLNESS. HIS PAPER, LE POPULAIRE, IS
FINANCED ON CREDIT, AND THIS MAY DRY UP NOW. DUVAL HAS SOLD
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ALL HIS PROPERTY EXCEPT HIS TWO HOUSES.

5. ACCORDING TO L'EXPRESS, THE PMSD NO LONGER RECEIVES ITS
TRADITIONAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR, WHICH
IS ANGERED OVER DUVAL'S EFFORTS TO RAISE WORKERS' EARNINGS.
DUVAL'S CRISIS IS AS MUCH MORAL AS FINANCIAL, THE PAPER SAYS,
BECAUSE HE IS FACED WITH THE CHOICE OF SELLING OUT HIS UNIONS
TO THE EMPLOYERS OR OF LACKING THE MONEY NEEDED TO CARRY ON

THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN. THE PARTY'S FINANCIAL TROUBLES HAVE MADE A MYTH OF THE ALLEGATION THAT THE PMSD RECEIVES MONEY FROM FOREIGN SOURCES, THE PAPER ADDED. L'EXPRESS CONCLUDES THAT THE SITUATION OF THE PMSD CANNOT PLEASE THE LABOR PARTY AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR, WHICH NOW SEE THE MMM HAVING A CLEAR FIELD TO TAKE OVER THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT. FOR ITS PART, THE MMM IS SEEING THE BASIS OF ITS CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE PMSD AS REPRESENTING CAPITALISM AND THE EMPLOYERS TURN TO DUST SINCE THESE ELEMENTS CLEARLY NO LONGER SUPPORT DUVAL.

6. JAMES BURTY DAVID, EDITORIALIST OF THE NATION, ORGAN OF THE RIGHT WING OF THE LABOR PARTY, ARGUED ON SEPTEMBER 22 THAT DUVAL'S "RETREAT" IS JUST A POLITICAL GAME TO WIN THE SUPPORT OF THE BOURGEOISIE AND THE CAPITALISTS WHO HAVE BEEN ATTRACTED TO THE MMM BANNER. THE CRISIS PORVES THAT THE PMSD IS NOTHING BUT A ONE-MAN SHOW. BURTY DAVID PREDICTED THAT BEFORE LONG DUVAL WILL ANSWER THE CALL OF HIS PARTISANS TO RETURN TO THE HELM OF HIS PARTY, AS HE HAS DONE BEFORE.

7. MEANWHILE, THERE IS DISARRAY ON THE FAR LEFT AS WELL. THE MAURITIAN MILITANT MOVEMENT-SOCIALIST PARTY (MMMSP), AN OFF-SHOOT OF THE MMM LED BY THE SOLE LEFT-WING MEMBER OF THE ASSEMBLY, DEV VIRAHSAWMY, HAS SUFFERED A SCHISM ITSELF WITH THE CREATION OF THE MAURITIAN MARXIST LENINIST PARTY (PMLM) BY SOME DISSIDENT FOLLOWERS OF VIRAHSAWMY. THE MMM LEADER, BERENGER, THREATENED LAST WEEK TO MAKE SOME PUBLIC REVELATIONS ABOUT VIRAHSAWMY'S PAST BEHAVIOR. VIRAHSAWMY COUNTERED BY CHALLENGING BERENGER TO ATTEND A MMMSP RALLY IN CUREPIPE AND MAKE HIS CHARGES IN PUBLIC THERE. BERENGER AT FIRST ACCEPTED, BUT THEN BEAT A RETREAT BY ANNOUNCING THAT HIS PARTY'S CENTRAL COMMITTEE (WHICH EVERYONE KNOWS HE PERSONALLY DOMINATES) HAD DECIDED HE SHOULD NOT ATTEND THE MMMSP RALLY.

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